INDIAN NOTES AND MONOGRAPHS

A SERIES OF PUBLICATIONS RELATING TO THE AMERICAN ABORIGINES

A NATIVE COPPER CELT FROM ONTARIO

BY

ALANSON SKINNER

NEW YORK
MUSEUM OF THE AMERICAN INDIAN
HEYE FOUNDATION
1920

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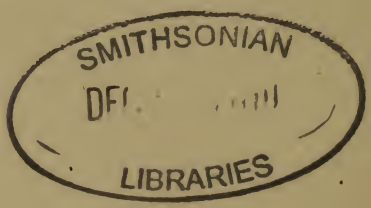
THIS series of INDIAN NOTES AND MONOGRAPHS is devoted primarily to the publication of the results of studies by members of the staff of the Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation, and is uniform with HISPANIC NOTES AND MONOGRAPHS, published by the Hispanic Society of America, with which organization this Museum is in cordial coöperation.



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A NATIVE COPPER CELT FROM ONTARIO

By Alanson Skinner

THE specimen here illustrated is an extremely long, thin celt, measuring 15 in. in length, by $3\frac{3}{4}$ in. at the bit and 2 in. at the poll, and is of a type more often encountered in the area from Tennessee southward to the Gulf of Mexico. It is made of native copper, shaped by hammering, the lamination still being visible beneath the green corrosion.

The celt, with one other, similar except that its edges flare at the bit, was found in 1908 in an immense Attiwandaron or Neutral Indian cemetery at Saint Davids, Ontario, by contractors engaged in stripping off surface sand to obtain a deposit of commercially valuable gravel beneath.

Aside from the fact that this implement

is of a type that could not fail to attract attention from any locality, its occurrence so far from the region where the form normally occurs is of unusual interest. While it is possible that the Attiwandaron were acquainted with the sources of native copper on Lake Superior, through their neighbors, the Huron and Tobacco Nations, the type and technique of this celt eliminate this direction as its source of origin. That the specimen came from the lower Mississippi or near the Gulf of Mexico is rendered more probable by the fact that discoidal beads, tubes, cups, gorgets, and even whole shells of *Strombus gigas*, a conch found in Southern waters, were not uncommon at Saint Davids, and also at other Attiwandaron sites in the township of Beverly and at Lake Medad, near Waterdown, Ontario.

No similar celt from New York is known to exist in any museum, but the same type has been found in various southern localities. For references to and illustrations of these, see Clarence B. Moore, Certain Aboriginal Remains on Black Warrior River, figs. 27, 28, 33, Philadelphia, 1905.

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